

REMARKS

Entry of the foregoing amendments, favorable reconsideration, reexamination, and allowance of the present patent application are respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102

In the Office Action, beginning at page 2, Claims 1-4 and 6-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102, as reciting subject matters that allegedly are anticipated by the prior art. More specifically, Claims 1-4, 6-9, and 11 were again rejected under section 102(e) over *Snyder*; Claims 1-4 and 6-11 were again rejected under section 102(b) over *Scott*; Claims 1-4, 6, 7, 9, and 11 were again rejected under section 102(b) over *Gross*; and Claims 1-4 and 6-11 were again rejected under section 102(b) over *Krebs*. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of these rejections.

This patent application describes annular combustors for gas turbines embodying principles of the present invention. As illustrated in the exemplary embodiment of Fig. 2, reproduced herein to better assist in an understanding of aspects of the present invention, the liner segments are subdivided in the axial direction into a plurality of parts, arranged one behind the other. The liner segments 16, 17 are fastened to the inner walls of segment carriers 18,...,21. These segment carriers 18,...,21 are divided into separate, detachably connected parts, which simplifies assembly and disassembly of the combustor (see page 5 of this application). It is clear from this application (*see, e.g., par. [0018]*), that the segment carriers 18,...,21 are preferably divided to simplify the assembly of the combustor. As a consequence, the separating line of the segment carriers is accessible for screw bolts. For that exemplary embodiment, there is a gap between the adjoining segment carriers, as illustrated in Fig. 2 of this application.

Snyder, *Scott*, *Gross*, and *Krebs* each fail to identically disclose such a liner configuration with separate, detachable segment carriers as recited in the combinations of the pending claims.

Claim 1 relates to an annular combustor having a combination of features including, *inter alia*, a plurality of segment carriers, the liner segments being fastened to the segment carriers, the

segment carriers being subdivided in the axial direction into a plurality of separate, detachably connected parts.

Applicant wishes to not clutter the record with redundant summaries of the four prior art documents cited against the claims, and therefore merely incorporates by reference the previous discussions of their disclosures.

Snyder describes, with reference to Fig. 1, a combustor module 14 with the outer liner 34 having a single piece outer support shell 44 having forward and aft portions 50, 52 (*see par.* [0024]). Similarly, the inner liner 32 is formed from a single piece inner support shell 58 with forward and aft portions 64, 66.

Scott, *Gross*, and *Krebs* similarly describe single piece, monolithic structures which fail to include segment carriers axially subdivided into a plurality of separate, detachably connected parts. Accordingly, each of *Snyder*, *Scott*, *Gross*, and *Krebs* fails to disclose a liner segment and segment carriers as recited in the combinations of the pending claims.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the subject matters of Claims 1-4 and 6-11 are not anticipated by *Snyder*, *Scott*, *Gross*, or *Krebs*, are therefore not unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 102, and therefore respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection thereof under 35 U.S.C. § 102.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

In the Office Action, beginning at page 7, Claim 9 was again rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as reciting subject matter that allegedly is obvious, and therefore allegedly unpatentable, over *Snyder* in view of *Luffy*. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this rejection.

Luffy, like *Snyder*, *Scott*, *Gross*, and *Krebs*, fails to disclose, describe, or suggest liner segments and segment carriers as recited in the combinations of the pending claims. Accordingly, even if properly combined with *Snyder*, the resulting hypothetical construct would still not include each and every limitation recited in Claims 1 and 9.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the subject matter of Claim 9, taken as a whole, would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at

the time of Applicant's invention, is therefore not unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), and therefore respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection thereof under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully submits that this patent application is in condition for allowance. An early indication of the allowability of this application is therefore respectfully solicited.

If the patent examiner believes that a telephone conference with the undersigned would expedite passage of this patent application to issue, they are invited to call on the number below.

It is not believed that extensions of time are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in accompanying documents. If, however, additional extensions of time are necessary to prevent abandonment of this application, then such extensions of time are hereby petitioned under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a), and the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge fees necessitated by this paper, and to credit all refunds and overpayments, to our Deposit Account 50-2821.

Respectfully submitted,

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